

HISTORICAL  
DICTIONARY  
OF TOGO

*Third Edition*

SAMUEL DECALO

# **HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF TOGO**

***Third Edition***

by  
**SAMUEL DECALO**

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*This book is dedicated to  
ROMA, RUTH, AND NIV*

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## Editor's Foreword

On a continent littered with political and economic failures, Togo's are among the most disappointing. Under German occupation, it was styled the "model colony." Under French colonization, it made modest economic progress, and its educated youth found jobs throughout the metropolis. The beginnings of the new independent state were also promising, although ethnic friction and political instability soon set in. When General Eyadema took power after a coup d'état in 1967 there was still some room for hope. More than a quarter of a century later he is still there, and every trace of hope has faded after repeated demonstrations, disturbances, and false democratizations.

This is the third edition of the *Historical Dictionary of Togo*; it is also the saddest. It traces the downward path of this unfortunate state and it includes entries on the whole cast of characters, the more sinister regularly winning out over the more credible. It also provides the necessary background entries on Togo's history, politics, foreign relations, economy, society, geography, and ethnic diversity. Yet no matter how negative, it does show that there are positive elements and tenuous hopes for a better future. For those who want to know more about Togo, it also offers an amazingly extensive and comprehensive bibliography.

This third edition was written by the author of the first two editions, Samuel Decalo. Professor Decalo, who has taught at the University of Natal and the University of Florida among others, remains one of the leading authorities on French-speaking Africa and also military regimes. His books include *Coups and Army Rule in Africa* and *Psychoses of Power: Personal Dictatorship in Africa* as well as the Benin, Chad, and Niger *Historical Dictionaries*. Like the others, this greatly updated and expanded edition will quickly become a privileged source of information.

Jon Woronoff  
Series Editor



## Bibliography

### Introductory Note

As is true for much of Francophone Africa, most of the literature on Togo is in the French language. Because of the country's pre-World War I status as a German colony, there also exists a significant amount of material in German on the history of the German penetration of the hinterland, and also reflecting continuing German academic interest in the development of their former colony.

The literature in English includes early material on the deliberations regarding the future of the two Togoland trusteeships in the aftermath of World War II (mostly United Nations documentation) and more recent material, mostly scholarly articles, chapters in books not exclusively devoted to Togo, and a variety of brief reports on contemporary developments. Only recently did the first monograph on Togo appear in English (by Knoll, 1974, on the German era). Though English language material on Togo has recently been much augmented, including two monographs (one a memoir of a Peace Corps volunteer) today, fully thirty-five years after independence there is still not a single comprehensive academic work exclusively on Togo, no matter what field. Thus, whatever one's specific interests, any serious research must automatically rely heavily on non-English sources.

The bibliography that follows, though extensive, is not all-inclusive and stresses, in particular, the Social Sciences and History. It lists most of the English language sources available and a representative sample of the most easily accessible or important material in French and other European languages. Though Togolese publications are quite difficult to obtain in the United States, many are first rate, and hence the most important of these (that are available in several African Studies' Centers and at the Library of Congress) are included. By contrast the bulk of the briefer and/or more ephemeral material (primarily from news weeklies), that was included in previous editions of this *Dictionary*, has been dropped for reasons of space. (Readers interested in this material should refer to the second edition.)

For researchers and other readers who must rely primarily on English sources, the following are especially suggested: for the pre-colonial era



along the Ghana-Nigeria coast, Newbury's (1961) study is unrivaled; for the early colonial period see the articles by Amenumey (1969), Cardinall (1926, 1927), Darkoh (1967, 1968), and the dissertation (1963/4) and subsequent book by Knoll (1974). For the so-called Ewe "problem" prior to Togo's independence, the best items are Coleman's 1956 monograph, Amenumey's several works (1969, 1986, 1990), and Welch's chapters in his 1966 book. Most of the anthropological work on Togo is in French, as are sources on Togo's economy; Tait's articles—especially his 1961 chapter on the Konkomba in Ghana—are solid, as is the chapter on Togo in the International Monetary Fund's *Surveys of African Economies* (1970). Finally, post-independence events are surveyed by Kitchen (1963), Howe (1967), De Chardon (1970), and Decalo (1973), in individual chapters on Togo in the books by Thompson (1972) and Decalo (1976, 1990), in the weekly *West Africa* and monthly *Africa Research Bulletin* (both series), in the annuals of *Africa Contemporary Record*, until it stopped publication, and in the annual reports and quarterly country survey of the Economist Intelligence Unit. Most of the seminal material in English (and a sampling of the most important in other languages) is briefly reviewed and annotated in Decalo (1995).

The literature in French is much more extensive and wide-ranging. The best single volume on Togo remains the massive *Histoire du Togo*, written by the prolific Robert Cornevin. The book, twice updated, presents the best single work compendium of facts on Togo's ethnic groups, pre-colonial history, French administration, religion, and early political evolution. It contains only sparsely detailed data on the post-independence era, but such material is not lacking in French, including in Cornevin's other publications. He has also written a brief book on German colonization in Africa (1969), which can be read in conjunction with Attignon's (1972) study of the evolution of Togo from the Congress of Berlin to the Conference of Brazzaville (1944). Also of note are the studies of Froelich (1956), Luchaire (1957)—whose articles are really lengthy monographs—Pauvert (1960), and Brioux (1967) on the Ewe unificationist movement and Kratz's two part contribution on Togo's early decades under German rule. Other seminal historical works include that of Agbanon II (1991), d'Almeida (1982) on the period under Governor Bonnacarrere, and Gayibor's numerous fascinating studies (especially of 1983). These are but a sampling of a very rich body of historical analysis that exists in French.

For Togo's ethnic groups there is likewise a wealth of data, though some groups have been much more extensively studied than others. Works that should be especially noted are those by Cornevin (1962) on the Bassari—as well as his other shorter pieces—supplemented by the more recent excellent English articles by Barros (1986, 1988), Froelich's articles, the jointly written study by Froelich, Cornevin, and Alexandre

on the "Populations du Nord Togo" (1963), and the articles by Alexandre, Agblemagnon, Bertho, and Blier (1981, about whom more later), Cordonnier's tour de force on the textile women traders of Lomé (1982), Kubik (1986, in German, about one of the towering patrons of art in Togo), Lucien-Brun, the excellent collection of articles on all coastal groups in de Medeiros (1984), the remarkably prolific Nieuwaal (who has seemingly single-handedly taken on the task of publicizing the northern Chokossi), Pauvert on the Kabré, and Riviere's and Surgé's numerous outstanding contributions on the Ewe.

For Togo's economy, the monthly compilations of reports and statistics by the Banque Centrale des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest are simply indispensable, as well as the various reports by French governmental agencies and Togo's Haute Commissariat au Plan, some of which are listed in the "Economics" section of the bibliography. Toporowski (1988) provides (in English) a dissident note on the Structural Adjustment programs forced upon Togo. Also useful are Robert's early article (1965) on Togo's all important phosphates industry (which can be updated by the numerous briefer articles published since), Agier's studies on the economic activities in Lomé's zongo (1981, 1983), and Le Bris's on rural markets in Vo (especially his 1984 monograph).

There is no single book, even in French, dealing in detail with Togolese politics in the entire post-independence era. However, a large number of articles have been written on various aspects or periods of Togo's evolution, and in the past seven years a significant number of critical assessments on the Eyadema era have finally appeared. Among the early material, one can note Cornevin's twin articles on Togo's foreign affairs (1972) and army and military coups (1968). Also important are the annuals *Année Africaine* and *Année Politique Africaine* and the various articles that have appeared in *Le Mois en Afrique* and in the more recently appearing *Politique Africaine*. But starting with the mid-1980s a much more hard-nosed analysis has developed on Togo, both its early history (see Ajavon, 1989) and, especially, the Eyadema era of misrule. Among the truly outstanding contributions of this genre one can note the work of Toulabor. His *Le Togo sous Eyadema* (1986) is the single best source to de-mystify Eyadema's Cult of Personality; his earlier 1981 article on the use of derisive language in Togolese political discourse is pioneering, as is his lengthy chapter in the book jointly written with J. F. Bayart and A. Mbembe, *La Politique par le Bas* (1991).

An increasing number of doctoral dissertations (many in English) have been conducted on gender-related issues and on education in recent years, and these have been followed up by more easily available articles listed under Education. Riviere has published a large number of fascinating studies on Ewe religion (1978, 1980, 1990), as has Surgé (1979, 1983), with some of the work of these two authors to be found under



Anthropology. The richness and vibrance of Togolese literature, poetry, and (more recently) drama, is well-known and is attested to by the ever increasingly larger section on Literature in this *Dictionary*. One could note Blier's remarkable studies of Tamberma (or Somba) Art and Architecture, especially her 1987 tour-de-force that is a work of art in and of itself and is more on the symbiosis of space design with a society's culture and moral values.

Finally, for the prospective tourist or the first time visitor, there are now infinitely more sources to choose from, especially in English, notably the sections on the country in Crowther's *Africa on a Shoestring* (1989), Shuttles and Shuttles-Graham's *Fielding's Guide South of the Sahara* (1986), and Trillo and Hudgens's *West Africa: A Rough Guide* (1990). A much more comprehensive country guide has appeared recently, however, in French: Passot (1988). *Jeune Afrique's Togo* (1979), though dated, remains useful.

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